

**New Hampshire State Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301**

February 11, 2016

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP #SPED-2016-4**

New Hampshire Assistive Technology in Education Initiative

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: 4:00apm, Friday, March 18, 2016

Proposal Inquiries: All questions about this Request for Proposals (RFP) should be submitted in writing by e-mail or fax (include your fax number) to:

Barbara Dauphinais
Bureau of Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301
Fax: 603-271-1099
e-mail: Barbara.Raymond@doe.nh.gov

The deadline for receipt of Inquiries is 4:00pm, Wednesday, February 24, 2016. The New Hampshire Department of Education (**Department**) will address written inquiries received by the deadline and, if they are determined to be vital to the competitive bidding process, a written response will be sent no later than five (5) working days after the deadline. In addition, any modifications to the specifications contained in the RFP shall be made, in writing, by the Department immediately following the deadline for receipt of inquiries and no other changes will be entertained after that date. All questions and responses will be posted on the New Hampshire Department of Education website (www.education.nh.gov). Verbal agreement or instructions from any other source are not authorized or binding on the State of New Hampshire (**State**).

All advisory committees, individuals and organizations are encouraged to distribute this Request for Proposals (RFP) to any/all qualified individuals/organizations.

Grant Award: The Department of Education (NHDOE) expects to award a two (2) year contract, effective July 1, 2016 or upon Governor & Council approval, whichever is later, through June 30, 2018, to the successful applicant. Unless there is a change in the plan requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for the contract shall not exceed \$200,000.00 annually or \$400,000.00 total for the two (2) year contract period.

Purpose and Priorities:

The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals from individuals, agencies, or organizations (hereafter referred to as applicant(s)) to work in conjunction with the NH Department of Education (NHDOE), Bureau of Special Education (hereafter referred to as the Department) to develop and implement a statewide assistive technology technical assistance (TA) and professional development (PD) system designed to increase the implementation of effective practices to address our New Hampshire students' assistive technology needs in education.

The technical assistance/professional development system will be designed using adult learning methods and strategies to:

- Develop the New Hampshire Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, A Comprehensive Guide to Assistive Technology Services based on the Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology: A comprehensive Guide to Assistive Technology Services by the QIAT Leadership Team and CAST, <http://qiat.org/index.html>. The eight Quality Indicators areas are:
 - Consideration of Assistive Technology Needs;
 - Assessment of Assistive Technology Needs;
 - Including Assistive Technology in the IEP;
 - Assistive Technology Implementation;
 - Evaluation of Effectiveness of Assistive Technology;
 - Assistive Technology Transition;
 - Professional Development and Training in Assistive Technology, and
 - Administrative Support of Assistive Technology Services.
- Design, coordinate, and sponsor a New Hampshire Assistive Technology Services in Education Initiative to provide technical assistance and training to schools and families regarding federal statutes, policy guidance, and promising practices from the field of assistive technology based on the New Hampshire Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, A Comprehensive Guide to Assistive Technology Services in schools.
- Provide a timeline for each year of the project that includes when goals and objectives will be accomplished, and when all activities will begin and end based on the quality indicators. This timeline must include the activities that will be implemented; the resources that will be used to implement them, and the expected outcome(s) of each activity. All documents used in technical assistance activities must be submitted to the Bureau Administrator prior to dissemination. All documents created shall be the property of the Bureau of Special Education.
- Coordinate with the New Hampshire Accessible Educational Materials Center; the New Hampshire Office of Technology; the New Hampshire Universal Design for Learning Academy; the New Hampshire Deaf Education Initiative; the New Hampshire Society for Technology in Education, and with national organizations such as the National Center for Applied Science and Technology; the State Education Technology Directors Association, and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education to provide clear, practical standards to guide Assistive Technology services built on universal design for learning principles to amplify the learning experience and reach the variability of all learners.
- Provide a comprehensive evaluation process that includes a plan for systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of each primary component of the initiative including, but not limited to, specific trainings, activities and products designed to promote assistive technology service in education. This plan should include specific timelines, measures, and proposed approaches to improved outcomes for students receiving assistive technology services in education.

This project will support the Bureau of Special Education in meeting the legislative mandate to provide technical assistance based on the following:

RSA 186-C III ~ the Department shall provide technical assistance and information to the school districts so that the districts may effectively and efficiently identify, clarify and address responsibilities under State and federal special education laws. Whenever technical assistance of a specialized nature, beyond that available in the Department, is required, the Department shall assume a leadership role in identifying sources of such assistance in other State agencies, the federal government, volunteer services or the private sector.

§300.704 (4)(i) State level activities: for support and direct services, including technical assistance, personnel preparation, and professional development and training.

1.0 Minimum Requirements: In order to be considered for funding, a proposal must include evidence of the following minimum requirements:

- 1.1 Demonstrate capacity and willingness to participate in activities to improve educational assistive technology services in New Hampshire.
- 1.2 Show evidence of the ability to work with representatives from State agencies, partner organizations, school districts, OSEP funded TA Centers, and other stakeholders.
- 1.3 Provide examples of effective communication mode skills (oral and written).
- 1.4 Expertise in facilitation and the provision of professional development and technical assistance based on adult learning methods and strategies.
- 1.5 Knowledge of evidenced-based practices, including those aligned with "Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, A Comprehensive Guide to Assistive Technology Services."
- 1.6 Demonstrate fiscal management capacity including the requesting of funds from the Department as well as oversight and dissemination of resources (fiscal and other) to project participants (including staff);

2.0 Services to be Provided: The applicant will create the New Hampshire Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, A Comprehensive Guide to Assistive Technology Service and the following services annually relative to this Request for Proposals and consistent with the Minimum Requirements.

- 2.1 Develop a statewide model that builds the capacity to disseminate and implement the New Hampshire Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, A Comprehensive Guide to Assistive Technology Services that involves the following actions:
 - 2.1.1 Design and coordinate TA/PD trainings that incorporate researched based practices and resources to implement the New Hampshire Assistive Technology Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, A Comprehensive Guide to Assistive Technology Services.
 - 2.1.2 Provide a timeline for each year of the project that includes when goals, objectives will be accomplished, and all activities will begin and end.
 - 2.1.3 Conduct an annual evaluation of the statewide trainings and make necessary improvements to the initiative for each year of implementation.
- 2.2 Coordinate the distribution of resources and information to schools, families, and students regarding assistive technology services. The resources and information must support the findings and information of New Hampshire Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, A Comprehensive Guide to Assistive Technology Services. The Quality Indicator Areas include:
 - Consideration of Assistive Technology Needs;
 - Assessment of Assistive Technology Needs;
 - Including Assistive Technology in the IEP;
 - Assistive Technology Implementation;
 - Assistive Technology Transition;
 - Professional Development and Training in Assistive Technology, and
 - Administrative Support of Assistive Technology Services.
- 2.3 Assist in coordinated training strategies for personnel preparation, professional development, and system development of certified personnel regarding assistive technology services in education.
- 2.4 Attend other assigned meetings that support the Bureau of Special Education initiatives.

- 2.5 Evaluation: Evaluations of each level of technical assistance will be conducted to assess the impact on local systems and changes in practice resulting in improved outcomes and compliance as well as building sustainability and capacity. An evaluation report, including a mid-year and annual report will be submitted to the Department.

3.0 REPORTING:

The successful individual(s)/organization shall provide the Bureau of Special Education with the following:

- 3.1 **Monthly Reporting:** Reports to be submitted with each invoice requesting payment will outline activities conducted and how the project met the purpose and priorities of the project.
- 3.2 **Annual Report:** Report detailing the accomplishments and challenges of the project, based on the evaluation of the project, within 30 days of the end of each project year. The first report will include strategies for improvement. The final report will include a comprehensive overview of the entire project. The Annual Reports will be posted on the NHDOE website.

4.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

The successful individual(s)/organization will inform the Department of any conflicts of interest (appearance of, or actual) prior to accepting the contract or while engaged in the contract.

5.0 TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- 5.1 The State shall not be responsible for nor pay for any costs incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 5.2 The Department reserves the right to seek clarification of any information contained in a proposal submitted to this RFP.
- 5.3 The Department reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted in response to this RFP. In addition, the distribution of this RFP shall not commit the State to issue a contract.
- 5.4 If the Department chooses to award a contract in response to this RFP, a contract will be developed by the Department for approval by Governor and Council. The contract shall incorporate, by reference, all provisions of this RFP and the successful bidder's proposal. In preparing a contract with the successful bidder(s), the Department reserves the right to clarify any terms and conditions contained in the proposal.
- 5.5 Public announcements or news releases pertaining to the award of a contract shall not be made until the contract has been approved by Governor and Council.
- 5.6 The State shall not be responsible for any work performed by the successful bidder prior to the effective date of a contract approved by Governor and Council.
- 5.7 Unless otherwise deleted or modified by mutual agreement between the State and the contractor(s), all general provisions contained on page 2 of Form P-37 State Contract shall be incorporated in the contract (see **Attachment A**).
- 5.8 All obligations of the State, including the continuance of payments under an approved contract shall be contingent upon the availability and continued appropriation of State, Federal or other funds and in no event shall the State be liable for any payments in excess of Such available appropriated funds. In the event of a reduction or termination of those funds, the State shall have the right to withhold payment until such funds become available, if ever,

and shall have the right to terminate or amend the contract immediately upon giving the contractor notice of such termination or amendment.

5.9 When delivering services under an approved contract, the contractor shall work under the broad supervision of the Department and Contracting Officer for this project.

5.10 The Department expects to award a contract effective July 1, 2016, or upon Governor and Council approval, whichever is later, to the successful contractor. Unless there is change in the plan requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for each individual contract shall not exceed the amount of \$200,000.00 annually.

5.11 "Any information submitted as part of a bid in response to this request for proposal (RFP) (or request for bid (RFP) or request for information (RFI) may be subject to public disclosure under RSA 91-A. In addition, in accordance with RSA 9-F:1, any contract entered into as a result of this RFP (RFI, or RFB) will be made accessible to the public online via the website Transparent NH (<http://www.nh.gov/transparentnh/>). Accordingly, business financial information and proprietary information such as trade secrets, business and financials models and forecasts, and proprietary formulas may be exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5, IV. If you believe any information being submitted in response to a request for proposal, bid or information should be kept confidential as financial or proprietary information, you must specifically identify that information in a letter to the agency."

5.12 Audit

Sec. 80.26 Non-Federal audit

(a) Basic Rule. Grantees and sub grantees are responsible for obtaining audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C. 7501-7507) and revised OMB Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations." The audits shall be made by an independent auditor in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards covering financial audits.

(b) Sub grantees. State or local governments, as those terms are defined for purposes of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, that provide Federal awards to a sub grantee, which expends \$300,000 or more (or other amount as specified by OMB) in Federal awards in a fiscal year, shall:

(1) Determine whether State or local sub grantees have met the audit requirements of the Act and whether sub grantees covered by OMB Circular A-110, "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit organizations," have met the audit requirements of the Act. Commercial contractors (private for profit and private and governmental organizations) providing goods and services to State and local governments are not required to have a single audit performed. State and local governments should use their own procedures to ensure that the contractor has complied with laws and regulations affecting the expenditures of Federal funds.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE AFOREMENTIONED CIRCULARS, GO TO

www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/index.html

5.13 Debarment and Suspension

Organization/Individual submitting a proposal will comply with the provision of the US Code of Federal Regulations 34 CFR 364 and the following US Circular if applicable: Office of Management and Budget (OBM) Circular A-110 "Uniform Administrative Non-Profit Organizations. The bidder/offeror certifies, by submission of this proposal or acceptance of this contract, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency. It further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include this clause without modification in all lower tier transactions, solicitations, proposals, contracts, and subcontracts. Where the bidder/offeror /contractor or any lower tier participant is unable to certify to this statement, it shall attach an explanation to this solicitation/proposal.

5.14 Copyrights

The Department reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Department of Education purposes:
a) The copyright in any work developed under a grant, subgrant, or contract under a grant or contract under a grant or subgrant; and any rights of copyright to which a grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

5.16 New Hampshire Federal Funds Handbook

All contracts, including this proposal must meet requirements stipulated in the New Hampshire Federal Funds Handbook:

http://www.education.nh.gov/documents/fed_funds_handbk.pdf

5.1.7 Disclaimer Information

Presentations, flyers, and/or products developed under the NH Assistive Technical Education Initiative the following disclaimer needs to be noted: "This document was produced with funds provided by the NH Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education federal discretionary funds and the views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Department of Education. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary the citation should be: New Hampshire Assistive Technology and Professional Development Initiative (2016-2018). New Hampshire Department of Education, Concord, NH.

6.0 LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNT AND CONTRACT PERIOD

- 6.1 The Department anticipates that the total cost for all proposed products and services will not exceed \$400,000.00 for the length of the contract.
- 6.2 The Department expects to award a contract effective July 1, 2016, or Governor & Council approval, whichever is later, to the successful contractor. Unless there is a change in the plan requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for the contract shall not exceed the amount of \$400,000.00.

7.0 EVALUATION PROCEDURES

- 7.1 An original and four (4) identical hard copies of a formal proposal must be received at the Department of Education no later than 4:00pm, Friday, March 18, 2016. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered for review. Each application shall include a narrative or other directly relevant material as needed to address the areas described in 1.0 through 3.0 of this RFP. The original documents must be submitted unbound and in such a manner as to facilitate photocopying.
- 7.2 Proposals will be evaluated to determine if the applicant has the ability to accomplish the **Services to be Provided** and meets or exceeds the **1.0 Minimum Requirements**. This evaluation will be based on the applicant's ability to provide evidence of the following criteria:
 - 7.2.1 *Significance of Proposal*: Description of applicant's capabilities to deliver the services, including a brief description of their personal experience and/or company's experience in developing and implementing a program of this type, to include references as applicable. Please identify the specific subsections of 1.0 as they are addressed (see 1.0 Minimum Requirements). (10 points);
 - 7.2.2 *Quality of Services*: Describe how you will accomplish the **Services to be Provided**, including activities and strategies that will achieve the desired outcomes. Also identify roles, responsibilities and partners to be involved for the various activities/strategies. Please identify the subsection(s) of the **Services to be Provided** as you address them in your narrative. (15 points);

- 7.2.3 Content knowledge, including but not limited to, knowledge and expertise to promote efforts to improve assistive technology services. (10 points);
 - 7.2.4 Technical Skills, including but not limited to: data collection and analysis, adult learning strategies and effective technical assistance, facilitation and communication skills. (10 points);
 - 7.2.5 *Management Plan*: Provide a work-plan, timeline, milestones or benchmarks in accordance with the activities to carry out **Services to be Provided**. (10 points);
 - 7.2.6 *Personnel and Partners*: Provide a listing of the individuals who will have responsibilities within this proposed project, their titles, qualifications and duties, and the amount of time each will devote to the project. Identify key partners, describe their anticipated participation and provide documentation of their commitment. (10 points);
 - 7.2.7 *Adequacy of Resources*: Provide a detailed budget, including budget notes/justification, which clearly explains the relationship between proposed activities and expenditures. The budget should be broken down into two (2) fiscal year; FY'17 (July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017) and FY18 (July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018), and not exceed \$200,000.00 for each year. Indirect costs may not exceed 8%. (25 points)
 - 7.2.8 *Evaluation Plan*: Describe your comprehensive plan for the evaluation of the proposed project's activities, effectiveness and impact (10 points).
- 7.3 In order to provide bidders with the opportunity to present a comprehensive response to this RFP, no page limit has been established. Applicants are reminded that successful applications are typically clear, concise, and well organized. It is strongly recommended that applications be organized around the elements listed in subsection 2.0 and further addressed in the information packet. Supplementary materials may be submitted as part of the application, however, these should be limited to items that substantively explain or expand upon information presented in the basic application. All supplementary materials should be referenced with the basic application. Four (4) sets of any supplementary material should be submitted.
- 7.4 Qualified applicants may be asked to provide the Department with additional written materials or documentation of qualifications, and may be asked to meet with Department Administrators or their designee to discuss their proposal.
- 7.5 Each bidder shall submit, along with the formal proposal, a completed/signed "Alternate W-9 Form" (see Attachment B).
- 7.6 Each bidder shall submit, along with the formal proposal, a completed/signed "Cover Page" (see Attachment C).
- 7.7 An original and four (4) identical copies of a formal proposal shall be submitted by 4:00pm, Friday, March 18, 2016 to:

Barbara Dauphinais
New Hampshire Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

8.0 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

All proposals will be reviewed and rated by an evaluation team appointed by the Commissioner of Education. The Department shall be under no obligation to contact bidders for clarification of their proposals, but it shall reserve the right to do so at any time prior to the award of the contract(s). All proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Procedures outlined in this RFP.

The Department reserves the right to interview applicants with the highest average scores for their proposal, but the Department shall be under no obligation to interview applicants. If the Department conducts an interview, it will be done by a team who will develop structured questions and scoring criteria that will clarify the applicant's ability to fulfill this RFP. If the Department chooses to award contract(s) relative to this RFP, it shall be to the responsive and responsible bidders that receives the highest total rating as a result of the proposal evaluation and/or interview process.

Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful proposer, all proposers will be notified in writing of their status, upon final approval of a contract by Governor & Council.

9.0 Post Submission Deadline

After the submission deadline, the Department will post, on its website, the number of proposals that it received from vendors.

After the Department's review and selection of a vendor, it will post all vendor names and their rank or score five days prior to submission of the Governor and Council contract packet to the Department of Administrative Services.

A vendor questioning the Department's identification of the selected vendor may request that the Department review its selection process. The request shall be in writing and be submitted to the Department within five (5) business days of the posting of the bid results, rank or score.

The Department has five (5) business days to review the request and issue a written response either affirming its initial selection of a vendor or cancelling the RFP. No hearing shall be held as part of the review. The outcome of the Department's review is not subject to appeal.

Enclosures:

Attachment A: P-37 Contract Form

Attachment B: ALT W-9 Form

Attachment C: Cover Page